The Glory of God in His Church

THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE CHURCH.

Ephes.3:21 "To Him be glory in theChurch and in Christ Jesus thruout all generations for ever and ever."

INTRO. Knowing of your worship last Sunday, at Elmira, your presence here this morning reminds me of St.Paul's observation at Atnens. Upon being pressedto speak of his Christian faith, the apostle began by saying, "In all things I perceive that ye are very religious".

If there is any truth in my comclusion that you Odd Fellows and Rebeccas are religiously inclined, I am correct in concluding that you are at home here with us this morning. There is much in common between the lodge and the church. The lodge, as well as the church, emphasizes belief in God, and takes from the Bible its teachings and guiding principles.

Having joined with us this morning in the worship of God, I am certain that you will appreciate the theme I have chosen and the text selected to support it. Read theme and text.

Before developing the theme, let me remind you of the N.T. use of the word,"Ecclesia", which among the Greeks meat the assembly of citizens for legislative or other purposes. The word, translated "church" in theN.T., denotes either a local congregation of Christian believers or the whole body of such believers, in all times and in all places. For our right consideration this morning we must forget the Church as an earthly organization divided into various denominations and sects. We must think of the Church Universal-any and all believers in God thru Christ, any and all congregations of worshippers of God in Christ.

"To God be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus", that is, in all true believers in God and worshippers of Him thru Jesus Christ.

I. There is a glory in nature. "The heavens declare the glory of God the firmament showeth his handiwork". Christ himself withdrew from the world of men in order to find strength in the glory of God's natural creations.

The greatest thrill I have received while visiting many of our national parks is the fact that God reveals himself in ~~the fulness~~ the fulness of his power and beauty. To me every sunset is the promise of a spiritual sunrise, every tree and flower is a message from God to my soul. Every changing season tells me something vital about our all-glorious creator. I am sure that every one present this morning has been blessed in the revelation of God on land and sea and in the sky.

II. There is also a glory centered in the historical shirnes of the world. Every state in the Union hasits historical points of interest. Every birthplace and every tomb of our illustrious great awakens in onlookers a reverence. Onecould spend his while life visiting such places in every part country of the world. If the destructive critics of our beloved government would occasionally visit our historical shrines, ~~I am sure that~~ they would cease their damnable criticisms, and become the patriotic citizens they should be.

III. But this morning I wish to center your attention on the glory in the church of God.

The very places set apart for the worship of God reflect His glory. You perhaps have in mind the great cathedrals of the world, but every place of worship, however lacking in architecture, however lacking in costly interior decorations, however hoary in age or delapidated

in appearance, radiates the glory of God.

Dr. F.W.Boreham told the story of an old lady in his native land who wanted him to be sure and visit her church when he came to visit her locality. "Oh, she said,"you must not fail to see my church; no one has seen Australia until he sees the church at Dunsten Brook". When Boreham did see the church that was to her the loviest spot on earth, a place of glory, it was only a rough shed standing out in a bare field. There is a little chapel in the Santa Cruz Mts. that is holy and sacred to me. Such churches as the one which stands in Elmira and this one in which we worship to-day, are filled with the glory of God.

IV. What gives glory to the House of God?

1. First because it is the place ~~where~~ that brings God in touch with human life, the place where worshippers secure and maintain fellowship with the divine. "Visions of God, conviction of sin, and inspirations for service most frequently come to men and women when they go into the house of God and make it a place of prayer".

2. There is glory in every church because of its hallowed associations. As we are worshipping we do not merely see the building with its ~~pews~~ pulpit and choir loft and pews. Nor do we see merely the ones who are attending worship this morning. We are conscious that we are compassed about by a great cloud of witnesses Hallowed memories! Memories of faces that once occupied seats that shall know them no more, and which can only be seen in the great Church Triumphant. Memories of old hymns we learned to sing in the days of our childhood, memories of messages that once stirred our very souls, memories of occasions such as surrender to God, marriage ,

baptism, final tribute to departed loved ones. Yes, there is glory in every house of God because of hallowed associations.

3. Every house of worship reflects the glory of God because it is the place of hope. It not only links man with the past but it ties him to the eternal future as well. Every church points heavenward and testifies to the hope which the Christian has in an eternal life with his Master and Maker.

Odd Fellows and Rebeccas, does not your lodge, for the same reasons I have given with reference to the Church, also reflect the glory of God? Does not your order link you to God, bind you together in hallowed associations, and fire your hearts with the hope of the celestial lodge above? May this common bond between us, may these similar hallowed associations and this same eternal hope bind us to-gether this morning as true worshippers of the living God, members of the Church Universal.

"To God be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus thruout all generations for ever and ever."